

I am writing in favor of HD Radio being set up so as to allow for a secondary audio channel. I am the Manager of North Dakota Public Radio, a statewide network with eight stations. The better sound of HD Radio is an advantage. But for us, the chance to increase our service by multiplexing an additional channel is the really exciting part of this new technology.

In the past, we have examined the possibility of additional full stations to provide for additional program streams. Much as we have wanted to do that, it has not been economically feasible for us in North Dakota. Multiplexing an additional program stream does bring this capacity within our reach. The idea is really a tremendous boost for us. We have had many ideas for programming with additional capacity, this would open up tremendous possibilities.

The first thing we would do with an additional channel is split our informational and arts programming into two streams. Although some listeners enjoy our morning and afternoon newsmagazines combined with classical and jazz music at other times, we frequently get complaints from music listeners who wish we would cut the talk and news listeners who gripe about all the music. With an additional audio channel, we would be able to increase our locally produced news and discussion programs, as well as our locally originated music programming. At the same time we would be able to bring in nationally produced programming that is currently unavailable to people in our area.

An additional channel would mean more programming produced with some of our local collaborators. These include Prairie Public Television, United Tribes Technical College, The Center for Rural Health, Notas Latinas, North Dakota State University, the University of North Dakota, state health associations (including Diabetes, Alzheimer's, and Mental Health) many local musical organizations, and many more.

Therefore, we urge the Commission to authorize the use of HD Radio to provide a supplementary audio channel. We also urge maximum flexibility for stations in use of this technology, including uses that could generate income to support our public service mission.